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A BRIEF SKETCH

OF THE

SCHOOLS FOR BLACK PEOPLE,

AND

THEIR DESCENDANTS,

Established by the

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS,

IN 1770.

PUBLISHED BY DIRECTION OF THE COMMITTEE HAVING CHARGE OF THE SCHOOLS.

PHILADELPHIA:
FRIENDS' BOOK STORE,
No. 304 Arch Street.
1867.

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THE following account of the origin and history of the Schools for black people and their descendants, has been prepared for publication, under a belief that it might be serviceable in maintaining the interest of Friends in this Institution established by our religious Society, for the benefit of the Colored race, under a lively concern for the promotion of the welfare of this oppressed people; and which, since its origin in the year 1770, has been supported to a considerable extent by the voluntary contributions of the Society, and is still in measure dependent upon the existence of a similar feeling of interest among the members for its support.

PHILADA., Twelfth month, 1866.

A BRIEF SKETCH, &c.

THOSE who are familiar with the history of the Rise and Progress of the Testimony of the religious Society of Friends against slavery, are aware that our predecessors were brought under much religious concern, on account of holding their fellow-men in bondage; a faithful attention to which resulted in the Society becoming ultimately clear of that iniquitous practice. In the prosecution of this righteous engagement, they saw the disadvantages which the people of color labored under, even after they were liberated from bondage, and truly sympathizing with them, they were induced to advise and assist them in many ways. They were especially solicitous that their offspring should receive such a religious and literary instruction, as would qualify them for the proper enjoyment of freedom, and for becoming useful and worthy citizens. Individuals, as well as committees of Monthly and Quarterly Meetings, labored diligently in promoting this desirable object. Long before the Society was clear of slavery, and at a time when the community at large appeared indifferent to the real good of the colored people,

Friends of this city established and supported a school, where the children of such could be gratuitously educated.

In 1770 there was but one Monthly Meeting of Friends in this city, to which all the members of Society residing here belonged. At the Monthly Meeting held the 26th of the First month in that year, the situation of the colored people, as respects literary education, was brought under consideration, and a proposition was made to adopt measures for instructing the children of that class. It cannot now be known who opened the subject in that meeting, but as Anthony Benezet belonged to it, and is known to have been a very zealous promoter of every undertaking calculated to benefit the people of color, it is probable it was introduced by him. The proposition was approved, and Friends desired to keep it under their care; and the further consideration was referred to the next meeting. At the ensuing meeting, held the 23d of Second month, the subject again claimed deliberate attention, and the following minute was made:—

"The proposal made last month for the promotion of a school for the instruction of negro children, coming now under consideration, and the sentiments of Friends being expressed in approbation thereof, after mature deliberation, the following Friends are desired to meet together, and to consider further of the most suitable manner of putting forward this intention; which it is the desire of the meeting may be promoted in such manner as may be most useful; and that they make report thereon to next meeting, viz., Israel Pemberton, Henry Drinker, Isaac Greenleaf, Daniel Stanton, John Drinker, Jr., Samuel Emlen, Jr., Charles West, John Morris, Isaac Zane, Samuel Noble, James Pemberton, William Savery, Joshua Fisher, Hugh Forbes, John Reynell, Joseph Mariott,

Joshua Emlen, John Hunt, John Baldwin, Samuel Morton, Jacob Shoemaker, Jr., and Anthony Benezet." A general invitation was also given "to such other Friends who may incline to attend the said committee on this business."

On the 30th of the ensuing month this committee reported, that, "pursuant to the appointment of the meeting, we have had several free conferences on the subject recommended to our consideration by the minute of last month; and being unanimously desirous that provision should be made for the instruction of negro and mulatto children in reading, writing, and other useful learning suitable to their capacity and circumstance, under the direction of Friends; we have agreed to propose, that a committee of seven Friends be nominated by the Monthly Meeting, who shall be authorized to employ a schoolmistress, of prudent and exemplary conduct, to teach not more at one time than thirty children in the first rudiments of school learning, and in sewing and knitting. That the admission of scholars into the said school be entrusted to the said committee, giving to the children of free negroes and mulattoes the preference, and the opportunity of being taught clear of expense to their parents; and if a sufficient number of such do not offer, others may be received in such manner as the said committee may judge most convenient and consistent with the good intent of Friends in endeavoring to promote the Christian education and real good of these poor people. That a subscription be promoted among Friends as speedily as may be, to raise annually not less than one hundred pounds* for the term of three years, by which method the expense will be rendered light, and become diffused among such members of this meeting who may be desirous

* Equivalent to two hundred and sixty-six dollars and sixty-seven cents.

of manifesting their concern for the religious instruction of many who now remain in ignorance, and deprived of the valuable blessings others enjoy. That the committee may have liberty given them, if they find, on experience, the occasion requires it, and the liberality of Friends in contributing will admit of it, to employ a school-master, of prudent and exemplary conduct and suitable qualifications, to teach reading, writing, and arithmetic, or another mistress, as they may find necessary."

This report was signed on behalf of the Committee, by Daniel Stanton, and being read and considered, was approved by the meeting, and a subscription paper having been prepared, "Friends generally manifested their desire of promoting the good purposes intended by signing the same, and signifying the sum they freely contributed thereto; and the following Friends, viz., Israel Pemberton, Richard Blackham, John Drinker, Jr., James Pemberton, Samuel Emlen, Jr., Hugh Forbes and Edward Jones, were nominated as overseers, to employ prudent and well qualified tutors, and for promoting and maintaining the said school, agreeably to the foregoing report, until a new nomination be made by the meeting; and to make report of their proceedings, from time to time, as the meeting may think proper to require."

In the Fifth month the committee met, and agreed with "Moles Patterson, to teach as many children as" they "should send to him, not exceeding forty at one time;" for which they engaged to pay him a "salary of eighty pounds a year, and a sum not exceeding eleven pounds a year for one half of the rent of his dwelling-house."

"The salary to the master was higher than we should have agreed to if we could have engaged one that we thought suitable on easier terms; or if a mistress capa-

ble of the service could have been procured, but neither at that time offering, the hopes we entertained of Moles being capable of discharging the trust to our satisfaction, and that he would continue in it, induced us to employ him on these terms."

They at the same time rented of "Benjamin Kendall the upper room of his house in Pear Street, over the potash works, at the rate of fifteen pounds a year." Having made these preliminary arrangements, on the 28th of the Sixth month the school was regularly opened with twenty-two children, one-half of whom were girls. At the next meeting of the committee,* about a week after, two boys and six girls were admitted, and other additions to the number were soon made.

"In the Ninth month some further addition being made to the subscriptions, and the number of scholars increasing, (six more being admitted,) we thought it would be expedient to employ a mistress to instruct the girls in sewing and knitting, and hearing of one that was suitable, we offered her such terms as we judged reasonable, which we were afterwards informed she did not incline to accept."

Some of the scholars first admitted were afterwards considered too young, and it was concluded to admit none under six years of age; and also, that the masters or parents of such as were able and willing should be requested to pay, "at the rate of ten shillings a quarter for those who write, and 7*s.* and 6*d.* for others." The schoolroom which they occupied "being subject to some unexpected inconveniences, they found it necessary to seek for another," but not being able to rent a suitable house,

* Anthony Benezet and John Pemberton, although not on the committee, appear to have met regularly with them.

or room, they concluded to meet weekly, until they could "find one, or agree to build a house for the purpose."

At the meeting of the committee on the 9th of First month, 1771, after examining the scholars, and being pleased to find that they "had made good progress," the minute says, "Went to the lot back of Friends' Alms-houses, [on Walnut Street below Fourth,] and are all of the opinion, that it is a suitable place to fix a school-house." On the 16th of this month they again met, but not having obtained a suitable room for the school, they concluded to apply to the Monthly Meeting for liberty to build a convenient house on the "south part of the alms-house lot." At the ensuing Monthly Meeting, which occurred the 25th of that month, the application was accordingly made, and liberty granted, "to build a school-house on the said lot, in such manner as would not incommode the habitations of the poor Friends. And two days afterwards, a number of Friends meeting on the said lot, after viewing it, and fixing on the spot for the building, agreed, that by running a fence across the south part of the lot, any interruption to the poor Friends in the alms-houses might be guarded against." In the report which the committee made to the Monthly Meetings in 1773, from which a part of the above has been taken, they say, "At our next meeting in the Second month, a calculation was made of the cost of building a school-house, twenty-eight feet east and west, and eighteen feet north and south, and our dear friend Daniel Stanton, who was very instrumental in the first promoting the establishing the school, having, by his last will, given twenty pounds toward it, and our friend Amos Hillborn having also given a legacy of twenty pounds for the same purpose, it was concluded we might apply these sums toward carrying on the building, and we likewise agreed

to apply to some charitable women Friends, who were likely to contribute towards the cost of the building, being desirous of carrying it on without lessening the stock of the annual contributions." "In the Sixth month following, some contributions having been obtained, the consideration of building was resumed, but not determined on until the 4th of the Ninth month, when it was concluded to build a brick house thirty-two feet in length and eighteen feet in breadth, one story high; and at several meetings in that month, the plan was settled, workmen agreed with, and by the care of some of us who superintended the buildings, the materials were provided and the work carried on, so that in the Twelfth month the school was opened in the new house; and on the 26th of that month we met therein." The cost of this house, with the necessary fencing, was £186 4*s*. 6*d*. "At the times of our visitations of the school this year," the report continues, "we observed great neglect of the scholars' attendance, in which we used endeavors to make a reformation, by some of us speaking to their parents, and otherwise, which had some effect; their neglect was one cause of their not improving so much as we expected." On the 30th of the Tenth month, 1772, the Monthly Meeting of Philadelphia having concluded to establish two additional Monthly Meetings, a committee appointed before the opening of those meetings, made a report, of which the following is a paragraph, viz., "And having considered the circumstances of the school established by this Monthly Meeting, and supported by the voluntary contributions of Friends in this city, for the instruction of negro children, being desirous of promoting the good purposes of that school, agreeable to the benevolent intention of the subscribers; we think it may be proper that an equal number of Friends, not less than three, be nominated by each

meeting, to have the care and oversight thereof." In consequence of which, the following minute was made by the meeting, viz., "After some time spent in consideration of that part of the above report which relates to the school, established for the instruction of negro children, there appearing a strong desire among us that the school may be continued, and the good purposes already experienced by it may be extended, and it is the sense of this meeting, that when the two other Monthly Meetings are established, it should become an object of the united care of the members of the three Monthly Meetings, to continue and extend the usefulness of the said school, in such manner as our duty and concern for the religious instruction of these poor people requires."

In the Eleventh month, this year, Moles Patterson resigned his situation as teacher, and was succeeded by Ann Patterson, his wife, who taught the school until the First month following, when John Pare was engaged. John was suddenly removed by death a few weeks after entering upon his duties, and the committee being unable to get a successor immediately, the school was suspended about six weeks. They finally concluded to employ David Estaugh on trial, "he having spent some time to improve himself under our friend Anthony Benezet, who having frequently met with us, and assisted us in the trust committed to us, now kindly offered to attend daily and give his assistance to David in the school. He entered into the service 19th of Fourth month, and continued till the 26th of the Tenth month, when finding the employment too heavy, he chose to resign it."

"Sometime before this, Jacob Lehré having offered his service, and being well known to several of us, who esteem him a religious sober man, well qualified, and of sufficient experience in the business, having taught school

some years past; we therefore agreed, after some conversation with him, to employ him, and to pay him a salary of eighty pounds a year, for six months certain; and if, after that time of trial, he conducts to our satisfaction, to continue three years in the service. Upon which he removed with his family to this city; and on the 6th of the Twelfth month, the school was again opened: and then, and at several times since, 32 scholars have been admitted into the school; and on our last meeting, several of them being examined, appear to be in the way of improving; and we are in hopes such care will be taken of them as to answer the good purposes intended. And as from the present state of our accounts, it appears most of the money hitherto subscribed hath been expended, we are desirous that the same benevolent disposition which hath appeared in many, and laid the foundation, may influence others to contribute towards the support of the school, by whose assistance, or by such other means as the meeting may judge most expedient, it may be maintained; that our concern for these oppressed people obtaining liberty may be manifested by endeavoring to prepare their posterity for making a right use of it. And as we have had frequent opportunities through the course of this service, for observing their capacity for learning, to be equal to other children, we are confirmed in our apprehensions that it is our duty and true interest as men and Christians, to promote and support this school; and hope that in other places, a concern of the same kind will be raised, as the good effects of our care become more known and observed. With the state of the account, we deliver a list of all the children which have been taught in the school, but for want of greater care in the master, we cannot mention the time when many of them were placed out to service or otherwise discharged.

"On the general state of the accounts of the stock for the establishing and maintaining a school for the instruction of negroes, it appears that Richard Blackham the Treasurer, hath received from the contributors their subscriptions for three years, £414 9*s*. 0*d*. From the contributors' donations, which it was agreed to apply toward the building of the school house, £70 8*s*. 4*d*. Three legacies applied in like manner, Daniel Stanton's £20. Amos Hillborn, £25. Richard Parker's £10—£55."

The above account was presented and read in each of the three Monthly Meetings and approved. Committees were also appointed to make collections; who succeeded in obtaining new subscriptions to the amount of £54 6*s*. Jacob Lehré being found on trial satisfactory, he was re-engaged in the Sixth month, 1774.

At a meeting of the committee, held First month 3rd, 1775, it was found that there were but nine scholars regularly attending the school. It was agreed to visit the parents and endeavor to induce them to oblige their children to attend more diligently; "but as it is not probable," the minute continues, "that so many will attend this winter season as the master is capable of teaching, it is agreed that it will be expedient to admit 10 or 12 poor *white* children to be taught in the school for the next ensuing three months."

The proposed visitation was made to the parents, which was thought of service; and in the Fourth month 40 colored and 6 *whites* were reported in attendance. Jacob Lehré continued in charge of the school until Twelfth month, 1776, when he appears to have left, and the school closed to the Second month, 1777. At this time John Haughton was engaged, and entered upon the duties of his station. About this period the committee again made a report to the Monthly Meetings, in which they remark,

"as we are, after upwards of seven years' experience, confirmed in believing that by a religious care to discharge our duty towards these long oppressed people they may receive much benefit, and the increasing concern that appears to restore them to their right to liberty, encourage us to hope Friends in general will be more and more united in a faithful fulfilling of their trust, by instructing them in necessary learning, and the ways and means of a livelihood suitable to their stations," &c. The transactions of the committee from the Third month, 1777, to the Third month, 1782, are not preserved. It appears from the minutes of the Monthly Meetings that they were careful to make appointments of Friends to superintend the school, and that it was with some intermission kept open during this time under the care of John Haughton. "A part of this period," a minute of the committee states, "was remarkable for commotion, contending armies, taking, evacuating, and repossessing this city, that schools kept within the compass thereof were generally for a time suspended."

The committee in their report to the Monthly Meetings in the year 1782, after stating that John Haughton had been engaged as teacher at the time of their last report, remark, "in which employment he continued till the Second month last, being five years, when his health appearing to be much impaired, he chose to decline the charge of the school. Soon after, in the Third month last, we had a meeting, at which our friend Anthony Benezet attended, and revived a concern which he had a considerable time before mentioned to some of us, of taking the school, whenever John Haughton should relinquish it; and his proposal being approved, it was agreed to allow him for the present year, the same salary given to John Haughton for the last, to commence on the 1st

of the Fourth month last, about which time he entered upon the employment, and is now engaged in teaching the children at his own house. We are free to observe, that the order and regularity in which it was maintained, and the progress in learning, have in all respects been equal to our expectation: the master having discharged the weighty trust in these respects, and in visiting the parents and guardians of the children, in order to excite his scholars to a diligent attendance, with a faithful religious care that claims our entire approbation."

During these five years they state that 250 children and grown persons were entered in the school, "and partook of the benefit of instruction, many of whom made considerable progress in learning, and discovered a disposition to avail themselves of the benevolence of Friends, in a manner that may be of much benefit by qualifying them for the useful purposes of life, and the removing prejudices entertained by some to their disadvantage."

They also remark, "from the state of our funds, it appears needful for Friends to consider the means of giving this benevolent institution a further support; and as through the unmerited goodness of Divine Providence the Society is preserved in the possession of much substance, we trust, no incentives are wanting to excite Friends to liberality on this occasion, especially when we consider that the support of it is so connected with the weighty religious concern and labor of Friends, to promote the freedom and real welfare of that long and deeply oppressed people, that we should not act consistent with our profession in suffering it to be discontinued."

When Anthony Benezet took charge of the school, he lived on the north side of Chestnut Street, above Third, at the corner of Franklin Place, the site of which is now occupied by the new building erected for the First National

Bank. The school was held in his own house, (probably on account of his feeble health,) with the consent of the committee. They appear to have surrendered to him the entire control of it, as there are no minutes of a formal meeting from Sixth month, 1782, to the Fifth month, 1784. At a meeting of the committee, held at the Fourth Street meeting-house, Fifth month 8th, 1784, there were present Edward Jones, Richard Blackburn, Daniel Drinker, Benedict Dorsey, John Field, Thomas Say, Jonathan Shoemaker, Richard Humphreys, Richard Wells and Miers Fisher, and the following minute was made :—"Several members of this board now report, that our valued friend Anthony Benezet, who for some time past has kept the school for the education of the black people departed this life on Second-day last, the third day of this month, having first made his will. And that he also left a letter, directed to the overseers of the school appointed for the instruction of the black people, a copy whereof it is thought proper to be preserved, being as follows :—'My friend, Joseph Clark, having frequently observed to me his desire, in case of my inability of continuing the care of the negro school, of succeeding me in that service, notwithstanding he now has a more advantageous school, by the desire of doing good to the black people, makes him overlook these pecuniary advantages, I much wish the overseers of the school would take his desires under their peculiar notice, and give him such due encouragement as may be proper; it being a matter of the greatest consequence to that school, that the master be a person who makes it a principle to do his duty. His wife, a prudent, sensible woman, joins him in the concern.

'With respect, I conclude. This from

'ANTHONY BENEZET.'

' To the Overseers of the School for the Instruction of the black people.'

"Which papers were laid before several members of this board the last evening by some of the executors named in the will.

"Upon reading the letter, and considering the contents thereof, the members of this board think it a duty they owe to their valuable deceased friend, to retain upon their minutes a record of the deep sense they have of his great and good services, not only in forwarding the emancipation of that oppressed people for a great number of years past, but also in giving up his time and labor to instruct the younger part of that race in such branches of useful literature, as would fit them for the common purposes of life. And the strongest proof of their love and good will to their departed friend, they think, will be to pay regard to the advice and recommendation contained in the said letter, written, as the board is informed, near the close of his life."

Extract of the will of Anthony Benezet.

"I give my above said house and lot, or ground rent proceeding from it, and the rest and residue of my estate, which shall remain undisposed of, after my wife's decease, both real and personal, to the Public School of Philadelphia, founded by charter, and to their successors forever in trust, that they shall sell my house and lot on perpetual ground rent forever, if the same be not already sold by my executors, as before mentioned; and that as speedily as may be, they receive and take as much of my personal estate as may be remaining, and therewith purchase a yearly ground rent, or ground rents, and with the income of such ground rent, proceeding from the sale of my real estate, hire and employ a religious minded person, or persons, to teach a number of negro, mulatto, or Indian children, to read, write, arithmetic, plain accounts,

needle work, &c. And it is my particular desire, founded on the experience I have had in that service, that in the choice of such tutors, special care may be had to prefer an industrious, careful person, of true piety, who may be or become suitably qualified, who would undertake the service from a principle of charity, to one more highly learned not equally disposed; this I desire may be carefully attended to, sensible that from the number of pupils of all ages, the irregularity of attendance their situation subjects them to, will not admit of that particular inspection in their improvement usual in other schools; but that the real well-doing of the scholars, will very much depend upon the master making a special conscience of doing his duty; and shall likewise defray such other necessary expense as may occur in that service: and as the said remaining income of my estate, after my wife's decease, will not be sufficient to defray the whole expense necessary for the support of such a school, it is my request that the overseers of the said Public School shall join in the care and expense of such a school, or schools, for the education of negro, mulatto, or Indian children, with any committee which may be appointed by the Monthly Meetings of Friends in Philadelphia, or with any other body of benevolent persons who may join in raising money, and employing it for the education, and care of such children. My desire being, that as such a school is now set up, it may be forever maintained in this city."

Application was made to Joseph Clark, who manifested a deep interest in the concern, but the circumstances in which he was placed, seemed to render it proper for him to continue the school in which he was then engaged; and accordingly the committee sought another Friend to succeed to the care of the school.

In the First month, 1786 the committee made a report to the Monthly Meetings, in which they say, "Our friend Anthony Benezet had the charge of the school when we last reported, which was kept at his house; in this employ he continued until the Fourth month, 1784, when he deceased. An intermission then succeeded, during which time we raised the school house, built on the Alms-house lot, for this purpose, another story, with a view to accommodate a mistress's school in the upper room, apprehending from the increase of black children it was necessary, and that the state of the subscriptions towards their instruction would enable us to accomplish it. This being completed in the Ninth month following, we engaged with William Waring to undertake the tuition of the larger children and grown persons, in the lower room, for one year, at a salary of £100; and with Sarah Dougherty to teach the younger children and girls in spelling, reading, sewing, &c., at £50 per annum, in the upper room. When the year for which William Waring engaged was nearly expired, a prospect of another school opening, which he inclined to embrace, he gave up the school, wherein he was immediately succeeded by Daniel Britt; who has it now under his care, at the same allowance made to William Waring. "The subscriptions for the support of the school from Eighth month 1st, 1782, to the 13th of First month, 1786, amounted to £576 9*s.* 7*d.*"—They conclude their report by informing the Monthly Meeting, that "our valued friend A. Benezet having made a large bequest to the school, and several other persons having also bequeathed sums of money for its support, when these donations come into our possession, and are applied in aid thereof, we expect subscriptions to a much less amount than has been usual will suffice; but until that may be done, we hope our friends in this city will not be discouraged in the continu-

ance of their liberality, for the support of an institution, founded on the most benevolent principles, useful, and essentially necessary for relieving our oppressed fellow-men from a state of ignorance, and enabling them to become useful members of civil community." Although the committee do not state explicitly the number admitted during this period, it is thought it could not have been less than two hundred and fifty.

At the meeting of the committee, held in the Third month, 1787, the following minute was made: "Our friend James Pemberton now attends, and lays before the overseers a letter from our friend David Barclay, of London, dated London, 2nd of First month, 1787, with a printed copy of the minutes of a sub-committee for managing the donation fund for the relief of Friends in America, held the 15th of the Eleventh month, 1786, whereby it appears that that committee have appropriated £500 sterling of the money in their hands for the use of this institution, with directions to draw for the same.

At the same meeting, three Friends were appointed to prepare a letter in reply to that of D. Barclay, which was produced at a subsequent meeting, and signed by all of the committee. This communication contained a concise history of the school from its establishment, for the information, as they allege, "not only of the sub-committee, who made the appropriation of the money, but also such of the contributors," as might desire to know something of the manner in which the money was to be applied.

This liberal donation was duly received, and invested in ground rents, as were the funds derived from the estate of A. Benezet.

Soon after this period the permanent income was so much increased from the bequests of several Friends, as

to render annual subscriptions unnecessary. In 1794, the committee came to the conclusion, that an act of incorporation would enable them to manage the funds more satisfactorily, and accordingly they requested from the Monthly Meetings authority to apply to the Legislature for one. The Friends however, to whom the subject was referred by the Monthly Meetings reported unfavorably to the application being made, and it was consequently not procured. In 1795 and 1811, owing to the want of punctuality in the payment of interest and ground rents, and from other causes, the money received was not suffi cient to pay the current expenses. The Monthly Meet ings upon being informed thereof, directed in each year a general subscription to be made, which resulted in obtaining in 1795, £247 2*s*. 5*d*., and in 1811, $336.71. It was found necessary also in the year 1821 to make up a deficiency in the income; this was likewise readily procured in the same way. The funds received several important additions from legacies, between 1800 and 1820; these, as well as those which had been previously received, it is believed, were left by members of our religious Society, except one of three hundred dollars, which was bequeathed by Thomas Shirley, a colored man. After the income became sufficient to defray the expenses, the duties of the committee were confined to the care of the funds, and a supervision of the schools—the routine of which was not much varied from year to year. They appear to have been regularly attended by an average of from sixty to eighty scholars per annum. In almost all the annual reports to the Monthly Meetings, they express the opinion that the schools were of great use to the class for which they were established, and the improvement of the pupils is frequently noticed as being very satisfactory. In 1817, the management of this concern was, by agree-

ment, transferred to the Monthly Meeting of Friends of Philadelphia for the Southern District, which, in that year, appointed a committee of men to superintend it. Two years afterward it was thought that an advantage would arise to the girls' school if women Friends were associated in the care of it, and accordingly, a number of women Friends were appointed, who attended two meetings in joint-committee with the men, after which it appears they held their meetings by themselves, as a minute made Fourth month 3rd, 1819, states that "Women Friends being of the sentiment that advantage will arise from men's and women's committees meeting separate, it is agreed hereafter to do so, and that women Friends have the charge of admitting the girls, and the general superintendence of the girls' school."

Anthony Benezet and John Pemberton left a number of valuable books for the use of the scholars, to which additions have been made from time to time.

For many years there does not appear to have been any other school at which colored children could have been gratuitously taught. Many of our most respectable colored inhabitants in the last generation obtained all their literary education at these seminaries, not a few of whom, from time to time, expressed their gratitude for what they considered the great favor conferred upon them.

Many cases occurred of men and women far advanced in life, attending these schools, often at great personal sacrifice, and often these exertions were made solely, it was believed, that they might have access to the contents of the inspired volume.

In the Eleventh month, 1830, application was made to the overseers by Thomas Booth and George M. Haverstick, and other Friends, for the use of the school room

of evenings during the week, in the winter season, for the gratuitous instruction of colored male adults. The application was granted, and the evening schools have since been conducted in the buildings belonging to these schools, and since their establishment fewer grown persons have attended the day schools. The day schools are however still made use of by persons of mature years, as it is seldom that none are in attendance, and they still afford opportunity, and the only one of which those are known to avail themselves, whose education has been neglected in youth.

In 1835, two youths, natives of Africa, one of them a son of one of the native kings, were sent over to this country for the purpose of receiving an education, one of whom remained at this school long enough to obtain a knowledge of reading, writing and arithmetic; the other one was able to attend only for a short time on account of the state of his health.

The growth of the city rendered the location of the schools on Willing's Alley much less central and convenient to the scholars than formerly, and the buildings which were adapted to the purpose in the beginning, became inadequate to the wants of the schools, so that the subject of providing better accommodations, claimed the attention of the committee and other Friends interested in the cause, for a number of years, and numerous references to it were made in the annual reports to the Monthly Meetings, even as far back as 1806.

In 1807, a report of a committee of the three Monthly Meetings was made, by which it appears they enjoin the committee in charge, to seek for and procure another situation for the schools, with the approbation of said meetings, as soon as practicable.

The mistress at this time lived in the school-house, and

having to sleep in the same room in which the school was kept, the accommodations were not suitable and it was agreed after due deliberation, to allow her £25 per annum, in addition to her salary, to enable her to procure accommodations out of the house.

The efforts to obtain a better situation do not appear to have resulted in any thing of moment for some years.

In 1838 allusion was made to the subject of a change, as desirable. In 1841 a committee was appointed to take the subject into consideration, who reported that way did not open to recommend any action. In the next year, and also in the one ensuing, similar committees were appointed.

In the Second month, 1844, four Friends were appointed to make enquiry for a suitable lot whereon to erect a new school house, and a few weeks afterward the lot extending 40 feet on Locust Street, and along Raspberry Street 100 feet to Shield's alley, (now Aurora Street,) was purchased with funds temporarily loaned the committee for the purpose. The buildings were not immediately commenced, it being decided by the Monthly Meetings that nothing should be done towards erecting them until the amount of money necessary for the purpose, and for the purchase-money for the ground, was paid into the hands of the Treasurer. The cost of the ground was considerably reduced in the early part of 1846, by the sale of the Locust Street front to the depth of 60 feet, on advantageous terms, and about this time the necessary appropriations having been made by the four Monthly Meetings, the contract was made and the house proceeded with. The report to the Monthly Meeting in the First month, 1847, contains the following: "In the Fifth month our Treasurer having received the balance of the proportion of $4,500 contributed by Friends

of the Northern District Monthly Meeting, and being informed that the Western District Monthly Meeting had appropriated the whole of their share of the surplus income arising from the sale of the lot bequeathed by John Pemberton, and that Philadelphia Monthly Meeting had also agreed to pay $1,125 out of their share of the same fund, the committee believed they were warranted in proceeding with the erection of the new school house upon the remaining portion of the lot. A plan and specification having previously been agreed upon, a contract was accordingly made for the building, which was completed under the superintendence of part of the committee. The lot on which it is erected extends 40 feet on Raspberry Street and the same distance on Shield's alley. The house is 40 feet long by 30 wide, two stories high, and covered with a slate roof. There are two rooms in each story the ceilings of which are 12 feet 4 inches in height. The large rooms are about 28 feet square, the others are 9 by 16 feet, in dimensions. The rooms in each story are lighted by three large windows on each side, and the Schuylkill water is introduced into both stories, the house is warmed by a furnace in the cellar, and ample provision is made for ventilation. The entrance to the lower room, occupied by the boys, is from Raspberry Street, and that for the girls is on Shield's alley. A sufficient number of new cherry desks has been placed in the large rooms for the accommodation of 70 pupils in each, and other convenient fixtures have been provided."

"The school house and lot, with the new furniture, have cost about $4,500."

On the 12th of the Tenth month, 1846, the school was opened in the new buildings, the conveniences of which, and arrangement, appear to have been very satisfactory, and the comfort of those concerned much increased. With

the additional room and other advantages of the new location, facilities for imparting instruction to a much larger number of pupils were afforded, so that the attendance in the two schools rose from an average of 70 before the change to 114 within two years afterward.

Owing to this increase in the size of the schools, some assistance was found needful to aid the teachers, and a female assistant was accordingly temporarily appointed in the girls' school, and a colored man who had previously been a scholar, in the boys' school. This man was afterwards succeeded by a female assistant. The funds of the school being found insufficient to meet the necessary expense of employing these assistants, application was made to the Monthly Meetings in 1848, for an appropriation of $75 dollars each, per annum, which was granted.

For the ensuing three years the schools appear to have been in flourishing condition, and to have further increased in size, and the expenses of conducting them having become heavier in proportion, an additional appropriation of $75 each, was obtained from the Monthly Meetings in 1851, in order that the salary of the principal in the boys' school might be advanced to $600, and some addition be made to the compensation of the assistants.

The Treasurer's report in the First month of 1810, appears to be the first one containing the item of money paid for taxes on the property held in trust by and for the schools.

In 1826 a committee applied to the County Commissioners for relief from taxation, but they reported that relief could only be obtained by an application to the Legislature.

About the close of the year 1839, a committee was appointed to apply to the Legislature for exemption of the property belonging to the schools from taxation, the

result of which is expressed in a minute of the Fifth month, 1840, as follows: "The property held in trust for the support of these schools is hereafter exempt from taxation, as appears by section 5th of an act, No. 133, of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, passed at the Session of 1840, and approved the 11th day of Fourth month 1840, entitled: 'An Act relating to the election of school directors, &c.,' the section being in the words following, to wit: 'Section 5th.—That the property, real or personal, held in trust or otherwise, for the use of the schools for black people and their descendants, now held in Willing's Alley, in the city of Philadelphia be, and it is hereby exempted from taxation.'"

This exemption, however, was terminated in 1853, and two Friends were appointed in the Twelfth month of that year to take such measures as they deemed proper, to obtain a renewal of it, but in the ensuing Fourth month they reported that they deemed it inexpedient to take any action at that time.

About this time the public mind became much interested in the establishment of new market houses in various localities throughout the city, in lieu of the old fashioned ones in the public streets, and application being made to the committee for the sale of the premises occupied by the schools, for the purpose of locating a market building there, an agreement for the sale of them to the applicants was made with the advice and consent of the Monthly Meeting, but the project having been given up, the said applicants never consummated this agreement, and consequently the schools were not disturbed.

In the Eleventh month, 1858, women Friends in charge of the girls' school, informing that it was desirable that an additional assistant should be employed in their school,

they were left at liberty to engage one, and about a year afterward a second assistant was employed in the boys' school; the size of the schools requiring more attention for the proper instruction of the scholars than could be otherwise given. To meet the necessary expenses without encroaching upon the funds of the schools, the four Monthly Meetings in 1861, advanced their annual appropriation to $200 each.

In this year an apartment in the basement was fitted up as a class-room for the girls, to relieve their school room somewhat from its crowded state, the principal part of the cost of which alteration was borne by the contributions of interested Friends.

In the few years including and preceding that of 1860, the schools appear to have been larger in size, and as prosperous in condition as at any previous time in their history; the average attendance of both sexes in 1860 being 157. The rooms were occupied frequently to their full capacity, and numerous applicants for admission were unavoidably refused for want of accommodations for them.

The increased desire thus manifested by the colored population of the city, to have their children educated, was very gratifying, and althongh regularity of attendance and punctuality to the hour were not so well observed as should have been, and strong efforts were necessary on the part of the teachers to maintain an interest in the studies by the scholars, and the organization of the schools was not always as perfect as might have been desired, their condition was generally regarded to be as satisfactory as could reasonably be expected under all the circumstances.

The buildings being now fully occupied, all further extensions of the benefits of the schools were unattainable, without larger accommodations for the purpose, and in

the Third month, 1863, a committee was appointed to take into consideration the subject of obtaining them, and though some attention was given to the matter, nothing very satisfactory appeared to offer, and the efforts in that direction were discontinued.

During this year it was concluded to employ a male assistant in the boys' school, instead of two female assistants, and a well educated colored man was appointed to the station.

The continuance of the Southern rebellion for several years, having the effect of greatly increasing the cost of living, the salaries of the teachers and assistants became inadequate. The committee were enabled to advance them in 1865 by the increase in the appropriation of the Monthly Meetings, to $400 each.

From the commencement of the war a gradual falling off in the attendance of the schools became apparent, more particularly in the boys' school. This was considered to be in part owing to opportunities for the larger boys obtaining employment becoming greater, and the necessities of some of their parents to have the proceeds of their labor to assist in maintaining the family. It was also found as the result of a careful enquiry, that a few of the pupils had been attracted to some public schools which had been established in the vicinity, but the causes of the decline seemed on the whole to be of a general rather than any particular nature.

In 1866, owing to the prospective diminution in the income of the schools by the withdrawal of the appropriation of one of the Monthly Meetings, it became necessary to reduce the expenses, and accordingly the assistant in the boys' school, and one of the assistants in the girls' school were released, and the size of the school was diminished.

The account of the "Schools for Black People and Their Descendants," is thus brought down to the present day, showing their history for a period of over ninety-six years, during which they have afforded more or less instruction to about 8,000 pupils, many of whom, it is probable, would otherwise have had little opportunity for receiving literary improvement. It has been gratifying to find that some of these scholars upon arriving at mature age, have had cause to remember, and express with thankfulness their appreciation of the advantages conferred upon them in earlier life by these schools.

In laboring for the welfare of the school it is evident that Friends in the last century had difficulties to contend with in providing the necessary means to defray the expenses, and the proviso of "when in cash," is frequently inserted in the minutes directing the Treasurer to discharge bills presented.

In 1786 the mistress informed the committee that a quarter's wages was due to her, which she would be glad to receive. But, on enquiry of the Treasurer respecting the state of the finances, it appeared that he had but about £7 10*s*. in his hands, which was immediately necessary for the purchase of winter fuel. The Treasurer was desired accordingly to pay it to the master for that purpose, and the mistress to wait till a further collection was made.

At the next meeting "The subject of collecting money from the subscribers to this Institution, being gone into, it is generally agreed to exert ourselves as much as shall be proper in this way this season, in order to make provision for complying with our engagements to the master and mistress." Afterwards, "It appears that some progress has been made in collecting money, but our wants not being supplied, further care in this matter is recommended."

Recommendations to the collecting committees to "renewed diligence" and "greater exertions," are frequent throughout the record.

The founders worked assiduously in their cause, and contended faithfully with many difficulties. At times when the attendance was small and irregular, they went from house to house laboring with the parents to induce them to send their children to school, and send them continuously.

Looking over the history of the past it may seem strange that when an opportunity, such as these schools afforded, one unknown before, was opened, there should have been any backwardness on the part of these people in availing themselves of it. On the other hand, instances have in no period been wanting of parents making such sacrifices to enable their children to attend school, as manifested that they had a high appreciation of the value of learning. Despised and degraded and oppressed by the ruling race, the colored people as a class, have been, and are, in very limited circumstances, and the battle with poverty always severe, is heightened with them by the cruel prejudice with which they have to contend. The sympathies of the Society of Friends have therefore been with them from an early date, and this interest in them continued from year to year, and was unabated even after others became interested in their cause. The report to the Monthly Meeting made by the committee in 1829 contains the following instructive sentiments in relation to these schools. "Although from the establishment of institutions, whose objects are nearly similar, in conjunction with other causes, the number of scholars has been smaller than usual, yet they believe that under the influence of a proper concern and interest, they may increasingly become a blessing to the descendants of the African race, for whose benefit and

improvement they were originally established. They are aware that successful labor must be preceded by proper engagement of mind, and while they are sensible that more important concerns have justly claimed a large share of the attention of many of the members of our religious Society, they feel desirous that this memorial of the exercise that was felt and travailed under by some of our worthy predecessors, may not be entirely lost sight of, but under the animating influence of the same kind of feelings by which they were actuated, we may be incited to the prosecution of every good work in relation to this interesting concern."

It is approximately estimated that there are at the present time (1866) upwards of 4,000 colored children in the city of Philadelphia of a suitable age to go to school. Of these, about 1300 are being educated in public schools for this class, upwards of 800 in different seminaries supported by the income from charitable bequests, and by voluntary and annual subscriptions, and probably 200 at private schools; from which it would appear that but little over 60 per cent. of the whole number are receiving an education at school.

It is encouraging and satisfactory that the public schools for the general education of the colored children have been increasing in number since their commencement in 1823, indicating an altered feeling in the public mind towards this long neglected class. Yet it has been observed that many of the parents preferred placing their children under the care of Friends, in consequence of which, their institutions have often been much crowded, even since the opening of the public schools.

An important part of the motive which led to the establishment of these schools arose from a concern that the principles of virtue might be early implanted in the minds

of the children, and in furtherance of this object the scholars have been required to attend meetings for worship, held near the middle of the week. And the recommendation of Anthony Benezet, that the teachers employed should be persons interested in the real well-doing of the scholars, has always been borne in mind.

Conducted under these feelings, the trusts which have been handed down from a former generation may still be executed with lasting benefit to these people, and by the continuance of such appropriations from year to year, as the inadequacy of the invested funds may render necessary, the good work may be continued, perpetuating a record of the interest of the Society in the welfare of the colored race, and advancing the object of the establishment of these Schools for Black People and Their Descendants.